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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 L-03 H-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00

INR-11 NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-03

PM-07 NSC-07 SS-20 DRC-01 /101 W
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FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0015
INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

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Classification-Authorized by:
J Amott - ARA
RDS - 3: April 20, 1987
J E Amott April 15, 1981
A/CDC/MR-DD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PBOR, GY, VE
SUBJECT: AMERICAN CITIZENS SETTLED IN DISPUTED AREA OF GUYANA-VENEZUELAN BORDER

REF: GEORGETOWN 0977, STATE 145883

1. IN HOPE OF MAKING DEFINITIVE EVALUATION OF FRAGMENTARY REPORTS RECEIVED FROM DEPARTMENT AND EMBASSY CARACAS OF AMERICANS, CHINESE, KOREANS, CUBANS, PUERTO RICANS, VIETNAMESE ETC. LIVING IN AREA OF GUYANA VENEZUELAN BORDER DISPUTE, EMBOFFS MADE INFORMAL VISIT TO REMOTE AND ISOLATED MATTHEW'S RIDGE AREA WEEKEND JULY 13. FOLLOWING TOUR OF AREA AND DISCREET INQUIRIES AMONG LOCAL GOVT AND POLICE AUTHORITIES, EMBASSY CONFIRMS, AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED (REFTEL) THE ONLY TWO GROUPS OF AMERICANS OR FOREIGNERS IN AREA ARE PEOPLE'S TEMPLE AGRICULTURAL MISSION AND SHALOM COOPERATIVE. OTHER ACTIVITIES IN AREA ARE CONSTRUCTION OF NATIONAL SERVICE CAMP SITE AND SMALL SCALE GOVT AND PRIVATE FARMING.

2. PEOPLE'S TEMPLE AGRICULTURAL MISSION: AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, THIS MULTI-RACIAL GROUP CONSISTS OF NINE AMERICANS LIVING AT PORT KAITUMA, APPROXIMATELY THIRTY

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MILES FROM MATTHEW'S RIDGE. THEY ARE ADVANCE PARTY FROM PROPLE'S TEMPLE OF THE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST, CALIFORNIA-BASED CHURCH GROUP, WHICH PLANS TO ESTABLISH AGRICULTURAL SETTLEMENT AT SITE NOW BEING CLEARED THREE MILES FROM PORT KAITUMA. GROUP COORDINATOR EXPLAINED THAT CHURCH HAS MEMBERS OF SEVERAL RACIAL BACKGROUNDS, BUT THAT ONLY BLACKS AND WHITES ARE CURRENTLY IN GUYANA. NO RPT NO CUBANS. PEOPLE'S TEMPLE MISSION IS EXPECTED TO HAVE ROUGHLY FIFTY MEMBERS BY MIDDLE OF NEXT YEAR. THOSE MEMBERS ALREADY IN GUYANA APPEAR DEDICATED, WELL ORGANIZED, AND ADEQUATELY FINANCED. THEY ARE FAVORABLY KNOWN TO EMBASSY AND LOCAL GOVT AUTHORITIES AND THEY APPARENTLY HAVE BLESSING OF DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND AGRICULTURE PTOLEMY REID.

3. SHALOM COOPERATIVE: THIS MULTI-RACIAL GROUP OF APPROXIMATELY TWENTY-SIX AMERICANS HAS ATTEMPTED TO ESTABLISH AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE AT LOCATION ROUGHLY EIGHT MILES FROM PORT KAITUMA. COOP MEMBERS LIVE IN GEORGETOWN OR MATTHEW'S RIDGE AND APPARENTLY ALLOW LOCAL AMERINDIANS TO DO MOST OF WORK ON THEIR LAND. SHALOM COOPERATIVE SEEMS POORLY ORGANIZED AND LACKS FINANCIAL RESOURCES. TWO MEMBERS HAVE RECENTLY APPLIED AT EMBASSY FOR REPATRIATION. LOCAL POLICE AND GOVT OFFICIALS IN MATTHEW'S RIDGE AREA SPEAK LESS FAVORABLY OF THIS GROUP THAN PEOPLE'S TEMPLE GROUP BUT ADD THEY HAVE HAD NO PROBLEMS WITH THEM

4. OTHER ACTIVITY: EVERY PERSON QUESTIONED BY EMBOFFS ABOUT PRESENCE OF OTHER FOREIGNERS IN AREA ANSWERED THAT THERE ARE NO RPT NO OTHERS. ONLY OTHER ACTIVITY OUTSIDE OF SMALL SCALE PRIVATE AND GOVT FARMING IN MATTHEW'S RIDGE AREA IS BUILDING OF CAMP AT PAPAYA CREEK, THREE MILES FROM MATTHEW'S RIDGE, FOR NATIONAL SERVICE, GUYANA'S PARAMILITARY YOUTH CORPS. PAPAYA CREEK CAMP, EXPECTED TO BE READY BY MARCH 1975, WILL PROBABLY HOUSE FIVE HUNDRED VOLUNTEERS, WHO WILL LEARN MILITARY AND CIVILIAN SKILLS AND FARM.

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